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TAGS: [UNGA](#) [PHUM](#) [EU](#) [NL](#) [CU](#)

SUBJECT: NETHERLANDS/CUBA: QUALIFIED SUPPORT AT THE EU AND  
UN

REF: A. A. SECSTATE 147620

[1](#)B. B. SECSTATE 148553

[1](#)C. C. SECSTATE 148506

Classified By: Andrew Schofer, Political Counselor, for reasons 1.4(b)  
and (d)

[1](#)1. (U) SUMMARY: POLOFF raised reftel A-C points with Jan Jaap Groenemeijer, Senior Staff Officer in the Western Hemisphere Department, as well as Ms. Maryem van den Heuvel, Director for Human Rights, and Reneko Elema, Senior Policy Officer for Human Rights. On November 1, Charge D'Affaires raised reftel A points with Jos Schellars, Deputy Director for the Western Hemisphere Department. The Dutch offered qualified support for U.S. initiatives on Cuba. END SUMMARY.

[1](#)2. (U) CUBA'S ANTI-EMBARGO RESOLUTION: In discussions at the EU regarding the Explanation of Vote, the Dutch supported laying the groundwork for future negotiations while stressing the importance of freeing political prisoners.

[1](#)3. (U) JOINT U.S.-EU DEMARCHE TO UNSYG, UN SPECIAL RAPPORTEURS: The EU will deliberate and decide on the U.S. proposals during the coming week. The thrust of the demarche to the UN was good, and of course the Dutch share our goals. Engaging the UN is a 'good idea.' However, the Dutch see a joint demarche as unlikely given the current split in the EU on Cuba policy. Separate U.S. and EU demarches, or some less formal discussion with UN actors, might be more acceptable to the EU as a whole.

[1](#)4. (C) DECEMBER 10 INITIATIVES AT THE UN: First, on the Cuba-specific event, the Netherlands supports the idea of pressuring Cuba to support human rights and release political prisoners. At the same time, the Netherlands is mindful of the impact on the prisoners, wanting to avoid any harm. Again, however, the EU as whole would be unlikely to participate. Regarding the UNGA resolution on political prisoners, the proposal seems positive in that it doesn't mention Cuba specifically. However, there is "not a lot of enthusiasm" within the Dutch MFA for the resolution due to many questions about the modalities -- the wording, the impact on other resolutions, the timing, and the venue (perhaps the Human Rights Council would be better).

[1](#)5. (C) PRESIDENT'S SPEECH AND INITIATIVES ON CUBA: Groenemeijer stated that the President appeared to be announcing a 'stronger' Cuba policy, noting that the Cubans responded to the statement as a threat.  
Gallagher